Heliocpter Service to Hilly Areas

847. SHRI PRITHIBI MAJHI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the draft scheme to link hilly and remove areas of the country by helicopter services has been prepared by the Helicopter Corporation of India; and

(b) if so, what are the names of the places where Government propose to introduce this service during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) and (b) A feasibility report for introduction of an integrated helicopter Service in the North Eastern Region under the aegis of North Eastern Council was prepared by Pawan Hans Limited (formerly known as Helicopter Corporation of India). The places identified in the survey are Guwahati, Shillong, Tura, Dibrugarh, Itanagar, Daparizo, Roing, Anini, Along, Mechuka, Passighat, Tuting, Chapakhowa, Kohima, Mokokching, Tuensang, Wokha, Dimapur, Mon; Pnek Bunhcbute, Ukhrul; Imphal, Tamenglong, Jiriban, Silchar, Agartala, Belonia, Aizawl and Lunglei.

The introduction of the service is dependent on approval by Planning Commission|Ministry of Home Affairs/ North Eastern Council.

Railway Line between Ajmer-Merta Via Pushkar

848. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA:
SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for laying of a railway line between Ajmer-Merta via Pushkar; and

(b) if so, by when a decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Survey for a new MG Rail Link from Ajmer to Merta Road via Pushkar (96 km) was carried out in the past. The Project was assessed to be commercially not viable and, as such, it was not taken up.

Handling over of Some Planes and Routes from Indian Airlines to Vayudoot

849. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a policy decision has been taken to hand over all the existing F-27s and 748s of Indian Airlines alongwith the routes to Vayudoot; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) and (b) Indian Airlines has so far handed over 12 aircraft (8 HS--748 and 4 F-27) to Vayudoot. Indian Airlines has also temporarily leased 3 HS-748 aircraft to Vayudoot till October 1989. 3 HS-748 (presently on temporary lease to Vayudoot) and 2 F-27 aircraft will remain with Indian Airlines for carriage of men and material. Vayudoot is free to operate aircraft handed over to them on routes of their choice.

Survey regarding Tourist Potential in Tamil Nadu

850. SHRI K. V. THANGKABALU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conducted any survey to assess the tourist potential in Tamil Nadu; and

(b) if so, what are the salient features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) Assessment of potential of tourist centres, is primarily the responsibility of the State Government concerned. The Central Department of Tourism has not undertaken any survey to assess the tourist potential in Tamil Nadu.

(b) Does not arise.

Discussions with Pakistan's Minister of Interior on Punjab problem

851. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have discussed and proposals to contain the encouragement received by Punjab terrorists through Pakistan borders with Mr. Ahsan, Pakistan's Minister of interior who visited India recently;

(b) if so, what are the details of the discussions held; and

(c) what is Government's assessment about Pakistan's attitude in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) and (b) Pakistan Interior Minister visited India as Special Envoy of Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto from April 8--11, 1989. Amongst the subjects discussed with him was also terrorist activities directed against India in the Punjab.

(c) Government hope that the establishment of a democratic Government in Pakistan will lead to the cessation of Pakistan's involvement in terrorist activities against India.

Effect of Recent Violence in J&K on Tourism

852. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION and TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the affect on the tourist flow both domestic and foreign in Jammu and Kashmir due to the violence which erupted there recently; and

(b) what are the details of arrangements made by Government so as to attract more tourists, particularly, during the summer season?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL)): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) the measures initiated by the Government for attracting more tourists to the State of Jammu & Kashmir include strengthening of tourism infrastructural facilities in the State and wide publicity of tourist attractions of the State. The Central Department of Tourism together with Jammu & Kashmir Tourism and Air-India have launched a major Worldwide campaign to promote Kashmir during the forthcoming summer season. Special Kashmir promotion seminars have been held in East Asia, South Asia, Japan, Europe and U.K. Indian Airlines offer a 10 per cent discounted return fare at US dollar 90 on Delhi-Srinagar-Delhi Sector.

Help Sought from Non-aligned Nations by Mauritius to get back Diego Garcia

853. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the statement made by the Deputy Prime Minister of Mauritius, on March 18, 1989, at New Delhi, to the effect that with the help of the non-aligned nations, Mauritius would get back the Diego Garcia;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government propose to take up the matter with the concerned country which seeks to build up a military base in the island; and